

**From:** John Helms  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 1/23/02 10:55am  
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

I write today to express my concern for the proposed settlement in the Microsoft/DOJ anti-trust case. The settlement reached by the DOJ and Microsoft is FAR short of the goal of addressing Microsoft's abuses in the marketplace.

Please readdress this matter and include not only tougher sanctions against Microsoft, but actually punish them for their abuses against this nations consumers and other companies.

Until Microsoft is brought under control, we consumers will see continuing reduction in choice and steady increases in price for Windows based software.

I also write from the unique viewpoint of a Linux user. Because of Microsoft's dominant monopoly position in the market, I find it incredibly hard to use my chosen system in a productive manner. Without government intervention I will find myself facing a steady barrage of Microsoft's proprietary file formats (.doc, .xls, polluted java, C#, MS XML, etc) that require the use of Microsoft products. As well, in the hardware arena it becomes increasingly difficult to find devices that have device drivers that work in my chosen operating system, even though my OS runs on exactly the same .x86 platform.

This settlement should require the following of Microsoft:

1. Force them to open their proprietary file formats used in MS Office, Internet Explorer, and Outlook, Outlook Express and Exchange.
2. Create a watchdog group that keep track of Microsoft's attempts at further efforts to "lock" the consumer into future proprietary file formats.
3. Fine Microsoft for all of their past illegal activities and make sure it goes back to all of the parties, consumers AND companies, wronged by their unscrupulous deeds.
4. Take a hard look at their activities in the "boot sector" and "dual boot" arena, such as their actions against BeOS and attempts to block computer manufacturers from selling multiboot systems. By "boot sector", I mean the fact that Microsoft has designed their operating systems to overwrite any previously loaded operating system entrys in the boot sector thereby attempting to restrict consumer choice.
5. I am also a computer tech. Microsoft claimed their introduction of Internet Explorer into Win98 was for the consumers benefit and caused no harm to the consumer. This is completely untrue! Any technician who had the misfortune to have to work on Windows 98's first version can attest to how often the system failed BECAUSE of Microsoft's shoddy attempt to include Internet Explorer in the operating system. This cost consumers an immense amount of money, probably into the billions of dollars in repair costs, data loss, and lost productivity.
6. Microsoft also claimed that Internet Explorer was not a seperate application and could not be removed. You simply have to go to <http://www.98lite.net> to find the truth. Yes it can be removed and once it is removed the problems I mentioned in number 5 are greatly reduced.

7. There is an open source project called Wine. This project is an attempt by open source programmers to recreate an environment in Linux and other operating systems to be able to run Windows applications without the use of any of Microsoft's intellectual property. They have made great progress but without help from Microsoft, may never have the ability to run applications with the same quality as they run in Windows. Please consider forcing Microsoft to give up this much needed information so that Wine can run Windows apps. Doing this will allow consumers and developers a choice in the marketplace.

In closing let me say that the current settlement reached by the DOJ and Microsoft stops far short of stopping their monopolistic efforts. I can think of NO other sector of our economy where a single company has so much control. I can think of NO other product where there is not at least ONE other competitor on the store shelf next to it. The computer and software industry in this country is ill and Microsoft is the disease. Please, for the good of the consumer and this nations economy, STOP MICROSOFT ONCE AND FOR ALL!

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